

NATCHITOCHES



PARISH

“...the health of a community is a shared responsibility of many entities, organizations and interests in the community, including health services delivery organizations, public health agencies, other public and private entities and the people of a community.”

– Institute of Medicine. 1996. *Healthy Communities: New Partnerships for the Future of Public Health*. National Academy Press. p. 12



**NATCHITOCHES
PARISH**

Natchitoches Parish

**Natchitoches Parish
Tourist Commission**
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318-352-8072

**Regional Office of
Public Health**
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Administrator
Northwest Regional
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History¹

Natchitoches, established March 31, 1807, was one of the original 12 counties in the state. It comprised, at the time, the enormous geographical area of nine full parishes and parts of three others. The parish was settled by the French, and parts of it by the Spanish as early as 1717. Natchitoches, the principal city, is the oldest settlement in the Louisiana Purchase. It was originally laid out on the Red River Channel, which brought trade to the tiny city for 100 years.

About 1825, the river changed its course and retreated about five miles east of town. The picturesque Cane River now divides the historical part of the parish. Interesting homes and landmarks are open during an annual historical pilgrimage. The restoration of the parish courthouse has been a recent addition to the rich heritage of the area.

Culture and Recreation³

Natchitoches is proud of its heritage. Unique architecture, including the largest assortment of Creole architecture in the Mississippi Valley, scenic beauty, the 33-mile-long Cane River Lake meandering through the center of the city, a Historic Landmark District. Landmarks Melrose Plantation and Kate Chopin Home, Magnolia an Beau Fort Plantations and an abundance of bed & breakfast establishments capture the imagination of its historic past. Trolley and boat rides, a National Fish Hatchery and Aquarium, Louisiana Sports Hall of Fame, National Center for Historic Preservation, museums, art galleries, theaters, and Fort St. Jean Baptiste are among the many attractions. Five major festivals culminate with the annual Christmas Festival of Lights (first Saturday in December), with fabulous lighting displays throughout the month in the "City of Lights."



Parish Seat¹ Natchitoches¹

Major Cities (over 5,000 population)²

Natchitoches	
1990	16,609
1997 (estimate)	17,318

Parish Population²

1990	36,689
1997 (estimate)	37,896

Breakdown of 1996 population (estimates)⁶

White	59%
African American	40%
Other	1%
Male	47%
Female	53%
Population age 0-4	7%
Population age 65 & Over	13%

Geography and Statistics²

Average elevation	130 ft.
Land area in square miles	1,256.4
Water area in square miles ⁴	43.0

Climate²

Average temperatures

Annual	63°
January	51°
July	82°
Annual average rainfall	53.2 in.

Labor Force (1995)¹

Civilian	16,640
Employed	15,290
Unemployed	1,350
Unemployment	8.1%

Agriculture¹

Cotton, soybeans, beef cattle and pecans;
paper, plywood, trailer manufacturing,
cottonseed oil, bricks and cement.

Colleges/Universities²

(within one hour commute)

Louisiana College, Pineville
Louisiana State University, Alexandria
Northwestern State University,
Natchitoches

Public Libraries⁵ 1

Educational Attainment (1990)⁷

Less than 5th grade	6.0%
High school graduate or higher	65.0%
Some college or higher	34.0%
Bachelor's degree or higher	16.4%

Major Employers (Products) and Number of Employees²**Private Employers**

ConAgra Poultry Company (Food manufacturing)	900
Martco Plywood Plant (Plywood manufacturing)	520
Willamette Industries (Kraft linerboard, Oil)	374

Public Employers

Natchitoches Parish School System (Education)	1,025
Northwestern State University (Education)	634
Natchitoches Parish Hospital (Medical)	425

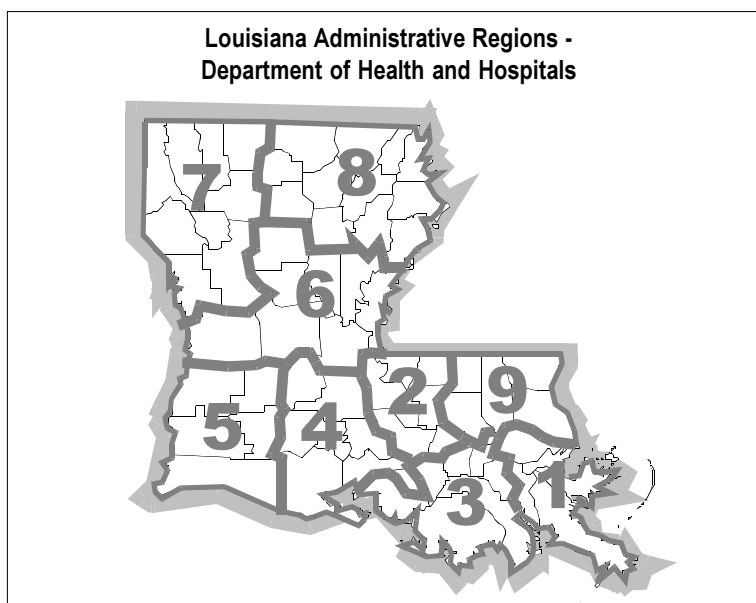
Poverty and Income

Persons in poverty (1995) ⁷	28.0%
Children under age 18 in poverty ⁷	40.0%
Per capita income (1996) ⁸	\$15,607



References

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- ² Louisiana Department of Economic Development. 1999. Louisiana Overview. keyword: overview <http://lled.state.la.us>
- ³ Louisiana Office of Tourism. 1998. keywords: regional information <http://www.crt.state.la.us/crt/tourism.htm>
- ⁴ Police Jury Association of Louisiana. <http://www.lpgov.org/>
- ⁵ State Library of Louisiana. keyword: directories <http://smt.state.lib.la.us/>
- ⁶ U.S. Bureau of the Census. 1998. Population Estimates. 1998. keywords: parish name <http://www.census.gov/datamap/www/22.html>
- ⁷ U.S. Bureau of the Census. 1998. keywords: people, poverty, small area income and poverty estimates <http://www.census.gov>
- ⁸ U.S. Department of Commerce, Economics and Statistics Administration. 1999. keywords: economics and statistical administration <http://www.doc.gov>



Region 7

Bienville
Bossier
Caddo
Claiborne
DeSoto
Natchitoches
Red River
Sabine
Webster

Region 8

Caldwell
East Carroll
Franklin
Jackson
Lincoln
Madison
Morehouse
Ouachita
Richland
Tensas
Union
West Carroll

Region 1

Jefferson
Orleans
Plaquemines
St. Bernard

Region 2

Ascension
East Baton Rouge
East Feliciana
Iberville
Pointe Coupee
West Baton Rouge
West Feliciana

Region 3

Assumption
Lafourche
St. Charles
St. James
St. John
St. Mary
Terrebonne

Region 4

Acadia
Evangeline
Iberia
Lafayette
St. Landry
St. Martin
Vermilion

Region 5

Allen
Beauregard
Calcasieu
Cameron
Jefferson Davis

Region 6

Avoyelles
Catahoula
Concordia
Grant
LaSalle
Rapides
Vernon
Winn

Region 9

Livingston
St. Helena
St. Tammany
Tangipahoa
Washington